631 the secretario, who is, without exception, a Ladino, for his responsibilities require a good knowledge of the Spanish language as well as office skills, which the Indians usually lack. Actually it is this official who controls all the administrative affairs of the municipio. He imposes fines, collects taxes, assigns communal work, and keeps in con-
[62] tact with the state authorities. After him rank the regidor, síndico, alcalde, police commander, and policemen.

621 Besides these authorities, which are the officially recognized ones, the Indians have their own government system, which in most places is still operating. Oxchuc is
[888] typical of the regional pattern. There the
[887] municipio is divided into two calpules, each of which is a kind of fraternity under the supervision of those old men having the
[776] greatest knowledge and prestige. Each cal-
[796] pul has also its own patron saint, venerated with special feasts and ceremonies throughout the year. (In Oxchuc the calpules are not geographically determined, and its members are spread in different parajes of
62 the territory.) Authority is now integrated in the following officials:

1 katinab, supreme chief of the whole calpul
1 okil kabil, "feet and hands" of the preceding, i.e., secretary
2 dzunubiles, supreme "pulsers" or "curers"
1 alcalde, who carries a staff of office
2 cornales (or governors), who also carry staffs of office
2 síndicos, who also carry staffs of office
4 x-tules (or regidores)

● 555 The four last jobs are reached by strict
624 hierarchy and indicate the progress of each
794 individual in the fulfillment of his social duties. This social-service career begins when the man is not yet married, when he is assigned the cargo of mayordomo of the church, which means that he has to attend to minor affairs connected with the church and to keep it clean. Shortly after his marriage he usually reaches the position of capitán, where he is responsible for the fies-

[P. 220-A]

555 624 794 ta for minor saints. He alternates between a period of activity and expense and one of quiet and economic recovery. The cargos alternate between church positions and civil government positions, but in communities where Indian tradition is stressed, there is no clear-cut division between civil and religious matters, because of the influence of the sacred and supernatural in daily life.

554 624 293 Those functionaries who have a staff of office wield great influence in their calpul. This cane (*nabté*), a sign of important status, is made of pine or other fine wood, and has a silver handle adorned with colored ribbons, primarily yellow, green, and red. The staff is ornamented by the owner and is considered a family object, usually placed on the home altar. Occasionally it is the [778] [782] object of prayers and offerings of incense. People carrying it are called *bastonudos*.

624 627 It is the duty of the staff-carriers to communicate to every paraje the orders of the ayuntamiento and those coming from the supreme chief of the calpul; to summon people for communal duties; to apprehend prisoners in cases of crime; and to deal with public problems such as taxation and epidemics. Coping with transgressions such as minor stealing, adultery, disputes, and intrigues are also their responsibility within the paraje, following the traditional form of procuring mutual understanding on both sides, in a calm atmosphere, around a bottle [692] of liquor. If conflict persists, those involved appear before chiefs of the calpul, who are called principales or "cabildos de justicia" even after they have finished their term of office.

794 The cargos from dzunubil on up are sacred and are open only to people with superior knowledge, recognized moral status, and expert experience in church ritual and in the semi-pagan ceremonies practiced in the caves, waterholes, and special mountains. These cargos are thus obtained not by automatic advancement but by special merits which are usually not acquired until advanced age. All such high representatives of

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

hall, but always appear at major ceremonies and at the inauguration of the new officials. Residents of the barrios and colonias can never rise to any position above that of assistant judge, but once they have served in this post they may become principales in their own localities. One week the first regidor from Ahk'olnantik serves with the third regidor from Alannantik, and the next week the second regidor from Ahk'olnantik serves with the fourth regidor from Alannantik. The ten police are ranked in five levels with representatives from each side at every level in the series except for the fourth level, which is occupied by police from the barrios.

These civil officials, called as a group the *huʔeletik*, those who are "able" (in control), constitute the traditional ladder of the hierarchy. To reach a high post, an official must first pass through each of the lower positions in the hierarchy. Outside of this ranked hierarchy, the posts of president and síndico are occupied by young men who are able to read, write, and speak fluently in Spanish. Literacy was, until the present generation, limited to a few men in their thirties. With increasing literacy, the competition for these posts is growing.[2] Men who have such skills are called upon as signers of official documents and are called *firmanetik*.

Also existing outside of the traditional hierarchy is the post of secretary which had, until 1965, been occupied by a Ladino. This was the only post which was paid; it also provided opportunity for earning extra income by preparing "acts," or official documents, and fines from court cases. The present incumbent is an Indian of Alannantik.

Because Tzoʔontahal's hierarchy is still a linked series of civil and religious posts, the structure of the civil hierarchy cannot be considered independently from that of the religious hierarchy. The major segments of the religious hierarchy are the *martomaetik*, mayordomos or caretakers, and *alperesetik*, alfereces or captains of the fiestas. The internal ranking of the sixteen mayordomos depends on the number of religious posts the incumbent has filled and on the rank order of the saints he serves.

The alfereces, or captains of the fiestas, provide a ceremonial link be-

2. Julio de la Fuente (1964:30) has summarized the effect of literacy in breaking the homogeneity of the community since the literate Indians have received greater privileges and release from communal work. When the entire community is educated, the monopoly of literacy is broken.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

of political relations is summarized for each of these conflict areas. Most of the events recorded below are transcriptions of informants' statements given in Tzeltal. I have chosen this method to show how the people interpret incidents and how this leads to cognitive restructuring.

The Conflict among Civil Officials

In the period of consolidation since the revolution, the crucial issue in determining the allocation of power among local civil authorities has been that of incorporating men who have special abilities to deal with external authority without upsetting an age-ranked system. Prior to the 1950s these skills were rare—in 1920 only four young men could sign their names and read. The civil careers of two men, Ceferino, a native of the town, and Augustín, a revistido Indian from Huistán, illustrate the different courses taken by this new leadership in the post-revolutionary period of the 1930s. Ceferino was included in the given structure of power while Augustín used his skills in dealing with Ladinos to gain personal power. Ceferino was one of the first four men of the town to learn to read and write. The civil authorities recognized his potential usefulness in the town hall, and succeeded in incorporating him in an honorific but powerless position as scribe. He described his introduction into local government:

After I got out of school, the town saw that I knew how to write. Formerly there was no one who knew how to write. In the town hall the judges and president needed someone to write down the contributions and the payment for the government agents. Therefore, when the civil authority changed in the new year, they talked to my mother. As was the custom then, four regidores came to "raise" me, bringing a bottle of trago as a gift for my mother. She did not drink it alone. Together with the regidores we finished the trago. After finishing the trago, the first regidor began to speak to my mother in the pat?o?tan, saying, "I am going to bring one of your children, one of your offspring to the place where we look and where we see [reference to town hall]. We ask this favor because he knows how to write. Therefore the judges and the president ordered me to come and raise him and take out his soil, his mud, for this duty for this obligation.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

does not drink or have a record of fighting. Character traits are given more significance than wealth, since the minimal differences which distinguish rich from poor can be lost within a few months if a man drinks heavily or does not work. The close identification among siblings means that in accepting a suit the girl's parents will take into consideration not only the boy's reputation, but those of his brothers. If they are considered to be disobedient, lazy, or frequently drunk, their brother may have difficulty finding a woman.

Positions of ceremonial importance in the household celebrations are filled by any of the elders who have acquired knowledge of the prayers. The nakawanehetik are chosen from among any of the bilaterally-extended relatives, compadres, or padrinos who have served five times in religious office. They are selected not only on the basis of how well they know the prayers, but also on their behavior when required to drink. A man who can hold his liquor and still speak well or who quietly goes to sleep rather than fighting when drunk is preferred. The me?il k'op is selected from among the female complements of these male relatives. She acquires her knowledge of the prayers in familial settings. The b'alnialetik are chosen from the kihtz'inal (younger siblings and cousins), or from among compadres or members of neighboring households. The rank order between the two sets of roles—the nakawanehetik and b'alnialetik—depends on relative age; thus the older nakawanehetik have greater authority.

Familial roles provide both a pattern and a springboard for other roles in the community. The father-son role pair is extended to the relationships between senior and junior officials in both the religious hierarchy and the curing hierarchy. For each saint, the elder mayordomo is called "father" (*Tatil Martoma*), and the younger is called "son" (*Nic'nal Martoma*). A man must fill the junior post at least two times before taking on the senior post. For each side of the dual division, the elder curer (when there was a recognized leader) was called "father" (*Tatil ?u?ul*), and the younger was called "son" (*Nic'nal ?u?ul*) or sometimes "youth" (*Biktal ?u?ul*). The term *me?il* (woman who has borne a child) is used in the reference to ceremonial roles played by women in the household, as in the case of me?il k'op (woman speaker) and me?il č'om (mother of the betrothal).

62
887 after for advice in many different events, such as helping to
888 decide the divisions of an inheritance among brothers, giving ad-
[154] vice to a drunkard husband, etc. They also have important polit-
ical functions: they are called in by the Ayuntamiento to help
solve the difficult witchcraft cases, and they have to approve the
nominations of officers before they are presented to the community
as candidates.

621 In selecting new officers, age, marital status, seniority
554 rights and previous experience are considered important. The
higher a position in the hierarchy, the more respected it is and
the more authority and responsibility it carries. While the lower
[555] positions can be filled by any man, the higher ones require certain
personal skills that not everybody possesses, so it becomes more
[624] difficult to find the right man for the job. Some men fail in
commanding the respect of their fellow citizens (because they drink,
or they fight with their neighbors, or similar breaches of behavior
for which they are not selected for cargo), or they become senile,
or die before they become pasados, so not every man arrives at the
ideal and most reputable role of Principal, which is the top role
a man can achieve at the community level.

621 To be a principal a man has to be able to get along with
624 his kinsmen and neighbors, he should not be suspected of witchcraft,
554 he should be able to deal with outsiders to the community avoiding
conflict with them, he should be fast in judging the behavior of
others and solving problems, and his word has to be precise and
carry the necessary weight to convince others that his opinions are
sound (un hombre que "sabe hablar"). Moreover, he can more easily

621 571 576 man bankil (respect term, "elder brother") the other would be his kiht'zin ("younger brother").

561 561 554 Older men are socially superior to younger ones. A man who has passed many cargos has more authority than one who has not served in the community government. A man with many children in a united family commands more respect than a man whose children are embarrassed of him because he is a trouble-maker. A good talker is better thought of than a boring drunkard. The same differentiation scale, although using some other criteria, also functions for women. Elder ladies have enough social status to be permitted to laugh in public while young married wives are expected to keep quiet. A woman known as a "good mother-in-law" collects the rewards of praise of other women. A wife who keeps her husband clean and well fed can visit around and be well received, while a lazy housekeeper would not be welcomed in other women's houses who fear of being judged "by the company they keep."

562 561 626

554 555 156 621 571 A constellation of factors, therefore, places the individual in a very particular status position, and his personal skill can increase his prestige or destroy it. Moreover, the total performance of an individual in the totality of his roles can not only increase his general status and gain the approval of his fellow men, but would be an important factor in saving him from witchcraft accusations. A man can try to control as much labor and capital as possible in order to maximize profits from his work and minimize its consumption, as long as he does not create enemies, and insures his prestige in as many dimensions as possible: he can give advice to conflicting parties rather than